

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 24 January 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
24 JANUARY 1968

1. North Korea

The US got nowhere at Panmunjom today. Pyongyang radio quotes the North Korean representative there as saying that "the latest is the most vicious provocation since the armistice--an extremely sinister and overt provocative machination of the US imperialist aggressors." United Press International quotes the North Korean as saying "the ship will remain in our hands."

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2. Denmark

The biggest losers in yesterday's elections were Prime Minister Krag's Social Democrats and the parties on the left. The most spectacular gains were made by the Radical Liberals--a party with pacifist inclinations--who more than doubled their representation by winning 28 seats in the 179-member parliament. This small party now holds the balance of power; it will probably join with the larger Conservative and Moderate Liberal parties to form a majority government.

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The Danes are sending their own scientific investigation team and a number of newspaper men to Thule this morning.

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3. Sino-Soviet

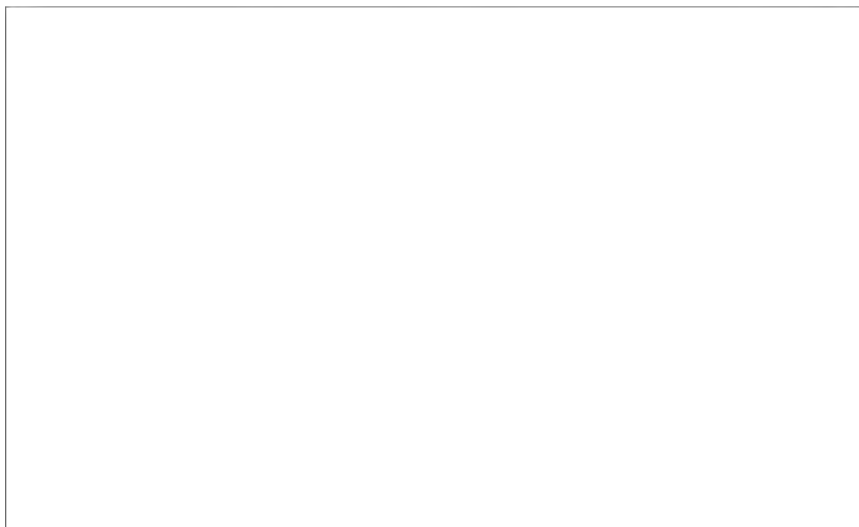
Recent satellite photography shows that a large number of Chinese Army barracks and support facilities have been built at a site in Sinkiang near the Soviet border during the past year. This is the first evidence of any Chinese move in response to the build-up of Soviet forces across the border.

4. Soviet Union

Ambassador Dobrynin told Ambassador Thompson last week that he expects a top-level decision within a month or six weeks on both the US-Soviet consular convention and on a new cultural exchange agreement. On the former, Dobrynin said there was no question of principle involved "but only one of finding appropriate time."

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5. Soviet Union



6. Dominican Republic

Leaders of the Marxist-Leninist Dominican Popular Movement told their members last week that the party has adopted a line on violence similar to that of the Guatemalan revolutionaries. The spokesmen stressed that the movement must strike back against "repression," and made clear that US citizens would be among its targets.

So far, there are no signs of an actual campaign of violence by either the right or the left, but the political atmosphere is increasingly tense.

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7. Thailand

The military oligarchy has taken a small but important step toward constitutional government. Municipal and provincial elections were held recently-- the first since the constitution was annulled ten years ago.

Although a restriction on discussing political issues reduced the elections largely to popularity contests, campaigning was often energetic and voter turnout was quite high. Governmental interference was minimal.

The regime now seems to realize that constitutional government cannot be put off indefinitely.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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More on the Phoenix: The Quaker yacht Phoenix is scheduled to make its second visit to North Vietnam during the forthcoming Tet truce period. According to press accounts and reports from the consulate

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general in Hong Kong, six Americans and one British citizen will sail the yacht from Hong Kong on the 23rd of January, with expectations of arriving at Haiphong by noon on the 29th. The yacht is reportedly carrying \$2,500 in drugs for the Red Cross of the Liberation Front and \$5,000 in surgical supplies for the North Vietnamese Red Cross, all of which the Quakers have stipulated must be used for treating civilian victims of the war. During a press conference before embarking, Lawrence Scott, the leader of the group, stated that Hanoi had granted permission for the yacht to visit Haiphong during the Tet truce period. Permission to supervise the distribution of the donations or to travel to Hanoi was not granted, however.

In connection with the voyage of the Phoenix, Hanoi appears to be sticking to its current prohibition of foreign newsmen. John Porterfield, an American correspondent who had planned to sail with the Phoenix crew, was refused permission to make the voyage by the North Vietnamese authorities.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL
ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Nothing of significance to report.

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